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The Athenian Mercury:

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A

Voluntary

ON THE

NATIVITY

OF OUR

Bleſſed LORD.

Chriſtmaſs-Day. 1692.

To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the Goverment ſhall be upon his ſhoulder, and his Name ſhall be call'd Wonderful, Counſellor, the MIGHTY GOD, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace —Of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace, there ſhall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with Judgment and Juſtice, from henceforth, even for ever, Iſa. 9. 6, 7.

Sicelides Muſæ! Paulo majora Canamus!

RIſe *groveling Muſe!* to *nobler ſtrains* aſpire!
Like yon ſweet *Lark*, our *Brother Poet* riſe!
Leave the *low Turf*, and with the *mounting Sun*
Beat down the *Clouds*, and clamber Heav'ns high Road,
'Tis a far *greater Saviour* calls thee now,
And juſtly asks our *Tributary praiſe*,
Than him whom late on *Thames* fair Banks we ſung,
And taught the liſtning Streams *great William*'s Name:
That *Earthly God* from this receives his *Crown*,
And lays his *Sword* and *Laurels* at his Feet,
More *charming* far than *Empires*, Self, or *Love*.
Him *Angels* ſing, him all the *Inſpir'd* of old,
Him lofty *Eſay* chief, of noble *Stem*,
Prophet and *Poet* both, in both Divine:
Eternal Truths wrapt in *Eternal Verſe*
Thro' all his *Golden work* diſtinct, outſoar
Ev'n thee great *Pindars Dithyrambick ſtrains*.
(a) From him the *Sybills*, *Virgil* ſtole from them.
So much the *God* ſwell'd his *enlighten'd Breaſt*,
That *Time* like him all at *one ſight* he ſaw,
Paſt, preſent, and to come, were all the ſame;
And thus he *hail'd* thy *Birth*, *O Son of God!*
The *Grecian Swan* let ſeven *proud Cities boaſt*,
(b) Old *Kittims* Realm, their *future Conqueror*;
(c) *Tyre* her *Alcides*, *Crete* her ancient *Jove!*
We their mean Triumphs pity, and deſpiſe
Their *ſpurious Heroes*, and their *fabled Gods*.
Child A *Hero* and a *God* to us is born,
to us Son of the *Eternal Sun*, himſelf the ſame.
is giv- Whoſe *Infant Hands* his *Fathers Thunder* wield,
Succeeding, not unequal to the weight
Of *Heav'n* and *Earth*, *Atlas* of either World!
Wonder of Angels! well may reaſons Line
Be then too ſhort to meaſure *Infinite*,
Known but by *Himſelf*, and all a *Miracle*.
Tho' vaſt his *Empire*, not beyond the reach
Of his unbounded *Wiſdom* to direct,
Adminiſtring with juſt and *ſteddy hand*,
As *wrong* and *right* require *rewards* and *pains*.
All *Ill* foreſeeing, and cou'd all prevent
Did he not overrule to *greater good*.
Thoſe who by *founding Laws* won worthy *Fame*,
(d) *Zaleucus*, *Solon*, and the *Spartan Sage*
Might learn of him, and ſit beneath his Feet:
Nay even our own great Legiſlator, firſt
(e) Who taught by *written Laws* to fetter *Vice*,
Not *all things knew*, much is there yet to add,
And *ſtronger Sanctions* to *reclaim Mankind*.
Thoſe ſhall our *Prince deliver*, as he thoſe
On *Sinai Mount*, in Smoak and Thunder *hid*,
Attendant Angels ſounding round his *Throne*:
He the *dread Angel* of the *Covenant*,
And Head of all the Quire, thro' *Parans Wild*,
Safe pilotting the *choſen Nations* home.
Nor *Angels* he, nor *Man* diſdain'd to head,
Tho' *fairer* far than all the Sons of Men,
(f) Tho' all the *Septenary rank*, ſurpaſs'd
Of *Fire-wing'd Minds* as *half-ſould Inſects* they.
For he Gods *only Son*, himſelf a *God*,
The unutterable, the firſt, the *boundleſs might*;
One of the *undivided Elohim*;
One with the Everlaſting Father he,
And that *Life-giving Spirit* from both proceeds
Him in the *Buſh*, tho' *burning*, *unconſum'd*,
Him *Moſes*, all the Fathers him ador'd.
E're *Abraham was*, *IS* he, and e're the World,
In the beginning both of *Times* and *Men*:
He *never was not*, for he ne're began,
All *Principles* of *Being* he diſclaims,
And only from *himſelf*, *himſelf derives*.
Sooner the *Bird* that ſees the *Morning* Sun,
May tow'r to that fair *Fund* of cheerful light,
Then *humane Thought* ſhoot thro' the *boundleſs Orbs*
Of his Duration; ſoon 'tis out of Breath,
And flutt'ring falls to ground, thro' *yielding Air*.
And as he *ever was*, he ſtill *ſhall be*,
His *Eſſence* indefectible, and firm
As his exhauſtleſs *Wiſdom*, *Power* and *Love*.
The *Gods on Earth* like *meaner men* muſt dye,
He only ever *lives*, and *ever reigns*.
He reigns a *Peaceful Prince*, whoſe *facile yoke*
With pleaſures ſhall the willing Nations bear,
No *Tribute* askt, but that of *Praiſe* and *Love*:
(g) Nor only he to *Sems* bleſs'd Tents confin'd
As now he is, tho' there he firſt appear,
In humble *Tabernacle* of Mortal Clay
Him the laſt *Gentiles* ſhall their *Saviour* own,
Whilſt thoſe who proud, againſt him murmuring riſe
He ſhall with *Iron rod debel* and cruſh
Like Potters crackling Clay beneath his Feet;
Till he, great *Lord of Lords*, and *King of Kings*
Acknowledg'd, o're the World triumphant reign.
O're *Mitzraims Field*, o're *Tarſhiſh*, and the Iſles
(h) From utmoſt *Weſt* to *Ophirs* golden Shore.
Whilſt a *new Face of things* around appears
(i) Loſt *Juſtice*, and fair *Truth* from Heav'n deſcend,
To theſe *forſaken Fields*, and Peace and Love
And *Joy Divine* all linkt in *cloſe embrace*.
Theſe ſhall compoſe our Prince's Glorious Train,
Who on his *Fathers Throne* ſhall ever Reign.

and the Government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder, and his name ſhall be call'd Wonderful,

Counſellor,

the MIGHTY GOD,

the Everlaſting Father,

the Prince of Peace ---

Of the encreaſe of his Government of peace there ſhall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it, with Judgment and Juſtice, from henceforth, even for ever.

Veni citò Domine Jeſu!

(a) From

NOTES.

(a) "From *him* the *Sibyls*, *Virgil* ſtole from them.] That *Virgil* in his *Sicelides Muſæ*, &c. made uſe of ſome of the *Sybils Books*, as Mr. *Dryden* obſerves in the Argument before his Tranſlation, will hardly be deny'd, he himſelf mentioning the *Cumæum Carmen* in that Eclogue. And it ſeems moſt probable that thoſe *Sibyls* (if there were more than one of 'em) had their Prophecies from ſome of the *Divine Writers*, there being many *ſtrokes* in *Virgil*'s Poem which are plainly taken thence, tho' as it ſeems, at *ſecond hand* — which we ſhall Obſerve as we paſs by 'em.

(b) "Old *Kittim*'s *Realms* their *future Conquerour*.] 'Tis generally agreed by learned Men that by the *Kittim*, or Sons of *Kittim*, ſeveral times mention'd in Sacred Writings, are meant the *Macedonians*, call'd Μακηδονες in Ancient Writers, there being alſo the River *Citius* near 'em, tho' the *Grecians* wonderfully alter the *Terminations* in whatever words they receiv'd from the *Hebrews*, as *Joſephus* Obſerves on this very Subject, and as indeed all other Languages ſtill do as well as they. Nor, we think, is't any Incongruity to introduce the *Macedonians* boaſting of their *Alexander*, who had not a *being* 'till long after, becauſe 'tis done by one who is affirm'd to have the Gift of *Prophecy*.

(c) "*Tyre* her *Alcides*, *Crete* her ancient *Jove*.] The *Tyrian Hercules* was found even among the *Grecians*, that the reaſon of *Alexander*'s quarrel with the *Tyrians*, was only becauſe they'd not let that Prince ſacrifice to him in their City; and if they were acquainted with the *Tyrian gods* who lived ſo far from them, much more may the *Jews* be ſuppos'd to do ſo, who were their *near Neighbours*. — Nor was *Crete* very far from 'em, lying very *deep*, almoſt in the *bottom* of the Mediterranean.

(d) "The *Spartan-Sage*] *Lycurgus*.

(e) "Firſt taught by *written Laws* to *fetter Vice*.] So ſays *Joſephus* of *Moſes*, as quoted by Biſhop *Andrews*.

(f) "Tho' all the *ſeptenary ranks* furpaſs'd.] See in our former Volumes, the Queſtion of *Archangels*.

(g) "Nor only he to *Sem*'s *bleſs'd Tents* confin'd.] That Prophecy of *Noah* — *He ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem*, may as well be apply'd to God as to *Japhet*, being thought by ſome *learned Men* to refer to Chriſt's coming in the Fleſh.

(h) "From utmoſt *Weſt* to *Ophir's golden ſhore*.] *Kircher* ſays in his *Obelisks*, that *Ophir* in the *Coptick Language* ſignifies *India*, which with the time of the *Voyage* thither, and other Circumſtances, make it probable that 'twas no other place than the *Golden Cherſoneſe*.

(i) "Whilſt a *new Face of things* around appears.] Here once for all we'll take Notice of ſeveral Paſſages in *Virgil*'s Eclogue, which ſeem plainly taken from this and other places of the H. Scriptures — *Jam redit & virgo — Jam nova progenies celo dimittitur alto — Ille Deum vitam accipiet — Paratumq; reget patriis virtutibus orbem*, &c.

Queſt. Gentlemen, You cannot be unſenſible how Induſtrious the Popiſh Atheiſtical and Profane ſort of Men have been, to Invent all manner of Cavils againſt the Divine Original, Authority, Integrity, Perfection and Perſpicuity of the Sacred Scriptures; which being our only Rule of Faith, and the ſole Directory in all the Concerns of Religion; we entreat your Aſſiſtance in the Solution of the moſt Important Queſtions they commonly Aſſault us with, ſuch as theſe, *viz. How we know the Scriptures are the Word of God? and that thoſe we now enjoy are the ſame which at firſt did proceed from God without any Material Alteration, Addition or Diminution? likewiſe, how illiterate Perſons may obtain the certain Knowledge of the Mind of God in his Word? and what need there is of their Uſe and Study of the Scriptures?*

Anſw. The Anſwer to theſe Queſtions is the Subject of the ſeveral *ORIGINAL PIECES* Printed by our Bookſeller in the *COMPLEAT LIBRARY* for the Months of *May*, *June*, and *November*, which ſaid Month concludes the *FIRST VOLUME*, whereunto we refer the Queriſt; where the Evidences of the Scriptures immediate procedure from God are produced, their Integrity, Perfection and Perſpicuity is proved, and the ways and means of Underſtanding the Mind of God therein, with the Neceſſity of the Uſe and Study of the Scriptures are declared.

Adverttſements.

☞ THE TRYALS of ſeveral WITCHES, lately Executed in *New-England*, with many remarkable *Curioſities* therein Occurring, By *Cotton Mather*. Publiſhed by the Special Command of his EXCELLENCY the Governour of *New-England*. Firſt Printed in *Boſton*, and now Reprinted in *London* for *John Dunton* at the *Raven* in the *Poultrey*.

☞ *The Fourth Edition of the New Martyrology* or *Bloody Aſſizes*, &c. Containing ſeveral *Speeches*, *Letters*, *Elegies*, and *New Diſcoveries*, (ſent out of the *WEST*) ne're Printed before: As alſo many large and *Private Memoirs* ſent from other places, which renders this *Fourth Edition A NEW SECRET HISTORY* of the late Times: To which is added the Effigies of the moſt Eminent Sufferers, *with many New Poems* on their Deaths not printed before; as alſo a much larger Account than has yet been given of the LIFE *and* DEATH *of the late LORD* JEFFERIES; ſo that the *whole Work* is now Compleat with an ALPHABETICAL TABLE annext to it. Publiſhed by *Thomas Pitts*, Gent. Printed (according to the Original Copies) for *John Dunton* at the *Raven* in the *Poultrey*.

AT a Cutler's Shop over againſt the *Mermaid* Tavern in *Cornhill*, is ſold an Infallible Cure for an Ague: If any Perſon tryes it, and it proves ineffectual, their Money ſhall be return'd.

LONDON, Printed for John Dunton at the *Raven* in the *Poultrey*, 1692.